

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-6 have been examined. Claims 4-6 are amended to address the Examiner's claim objections under MPEP § 608.01(n). These changes are merely clarifying amendments, and are not believed to affect the scope of the claims in any way, and no estoppel is intended. New claims 7-10 have been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 2, 3, 4/2 and 4/3 are allowed. Applicant also thanks the Examiner for indicating that claim 4/1 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. However, instead of rewriting claim 4/1 in independent form, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of base claim 1 for the reasons set forth below.

Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C § 102(e) as Anticipated by Saux et al.

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Saux et al. (US Published Patent Application 2003/0231282; hereinafter "Saux"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reason set forth below.

Applicant claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 371 from priority document PCT/JP04/04557, which claims priority from Japanese Application 2003-106600 having a priority date of April 10, 2003. Furthermore, the filing date (i.e. **June 11, 2003**) of Saux is after the filing date (i.e. **April 10, 2003**) of the foreign priority document (i.e., JP Application 2003-106600).

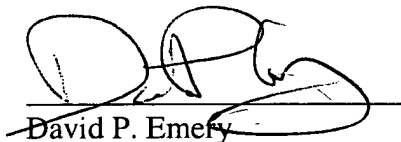
Accordingly, Applicant is currently submitting a translation of JP App. No. 2003-106600 to perfect the claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) and eliminate Saux as a prior art reference. Also, Applicant is currently obtaining a statement by the translator that the translation of the priority document is correct and will submit the statement in due course.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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